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ABSTRACT

The author focuses on student teacher interaction and the daily experience of the speech communication instructor to suggest what might happen to the teaching of speech communication 75 years from the date of this presentation. The topics of papers at a Communication Association panel in the year 2059 might include the following: (1) providing feedback on group discussion exercises for college level basic competency in group skills, (2) using business situations in setting up exercises for high school interviewing competencies, (3) selecting video scenes to integrate with discussion of ethical concerns, (4) using the Great Teachers Series for developing the public speaking class, and (5) using United Nations proceedings for evaluating evidence from an intercultural perspective. The similarity of content to that of the present is apparent. Technology, however, will change the delivery system. What will not change is the interaction between student and teacher. (HTH)

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"Student-Teacher Interactions in 2059"

A Presentation at the

EASTERN COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION

75th Annual Meeting

March 9, 1984

Philadelphia - Hershey Hotel

Panel: "The Next 75 Years"

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"STUDENT-TEACHER INTERACTIONS IN 2059"

To paraphrase the poet:

> Breathes there the professor
> Who never to himself has said ,
> "What would it be like to teach
> Some 75 years into the Future?"
> If so, mark him well for
> His vague dreams and
> His path covered with weeds,
> Deems him unworthy to teach the young.
> But garland the professor who
> Looks beyond the horizon, strives for the new,
> And peers through the fog. For there is the one
> Who strains to catapult the young to newer paths,
> To higher mountains, and bluer seas.

Thus, to help you win your garland and seek my own, this paper will sketch one viewpoint of what might happen to the teaching of speech communication 75 years from now. While others in higher education have focused upon the societal and institutional forces which will change, modify, and sustain that which we now know, I would like to focus on the interaction of the student and teacher and the day-to-day life of the speech communication instructor.

Given the explosion of today's knowledge furnaces within industry and universities, one probably needs to look back 2300 years to Greek education to get a perspective on what education will be like in 2059. Such a perspective allows one to discover what will probably be the same, what will be different, and what will have radically changed. To develop a context, I am going to suggest what might be the papers on a similar panel at the 150th Eastern Convention. Thus, we can learn about the latest ideas in 2059 as well as the current concerns.

Paper I: "Providing Feedback on the Group Discussion Exercises for the Basic Competency on the College Level for Group Skills"

Note that in this paper a concern for a type of class does not exist. Students will have sets of skills to master at each level--elementary, secondary, and college. Skills, knowledge, and attitudes will be outlined for areas of study. These goals will be completed for credit. For example, the college skills will be defined by the professional organization, modified by the college for its mission, and individualized by the student and her/his advisor. Therefore, the secret of such instructional base is the feedback the instructor supplies that is immediate for the specific exercise, that which is transmitted to the advisor, and that feedback which becomes part of the student's educational record plan.

The concept of each student's record, being a detailed set of plans and notes of achievement of that plan, will stem from the current work on Individualized Educational Plans that handicapped students receive because of PL 94 - 142. The technology will be present for such recordkeeping. The professor will have available, on the small screen on his desk, the specific feedback from the previous assignment, so that it is known that Jane needs to work on providing more content comments, Tom needs work on providing socio-emotional comments to others, and Mary needs to ask questions of others. The technology that William Work mentions in "Communication Education for the Twenty-First Century" will have its main impact on the records we keep, the feedback that is given, and the way the instructional packages are delivered.

This paper on feedback will explain how the voice activated records need to respond to the specific student needs as well as the skills defined

by the school. Each teacher will have small computers wired into a main computer. The author of the paper is concerned that student needs are dominating the feedback and not enough is there in relationship to the standards which the university has set. 'Does this theme sound familiar?

Paper II: "Using Business Situations in Setting Up Exercises for the High School Competencies in Interviewing"

The debate over what is the appropriate core experience will continue. David Knapp in his article "Education in the 80s" wrote, "The real task which confronts us is to define the core intellectual experience which any student, regardless of principal interest, should encounter in a university, within the context of his or her time." He goes on to observe that introductory courses do not make a core curriculum. Thus, this debate over the expense will continue, just as will the problem of what should be included from the world of work.

The high school setting will probably continue to have its problems orienting around serving all students. Interviews will change more than any other interaction taught in speech communicatitn. Research on the dyad will have produced such specific analysis of personality types that strategies will center around establishing the nature of the other person and adapting communication to that person. While the nature of questions will remain the same, the pre-knowledge that exists will change radically. A person will be able to hand the interviewer detailed records of educational progress. Each person will have the equivalent of the scene designer's portfolio to provide in an interview. The teacher will be looking for what projects should be part of the permanent record. More and more common in this period will be the advisor at each level of education playing a major role in the recordkeeping. At the college level, a person will have an advisor from the start. Many teachers will have this contact with students as part of one's load. The nature of recordkeeping and accuracy of what is entered will have its own built-in accountability system, so that teachers who do not do this well

will be moved on to other tasks. While Stephen Trachtenberg argues in "What Universities Will be Like in the Year 2000," "tax-supported college and universities will suffer from decaying facilities, excessively large classes, and outmoded equipment," I believe that the opposite will occur by 2059. Only the public-funded institutions will be able to afford the type of equipment and organization needed to sustain the educational changes of the period.

Paper III: "Selecting Scenes From the Videos to Integrate With Concerns of Ethics"

Note that the topic of ethics is being treated with scenes from videos that have been prepared through central publishing houses. Just as textbooks represent the content and attitudes that fit our instruction, the teacher then will select videos to present the information. The individualization mentioned earlier will be part of the selection process in this decade. While we write textbooks for specific levels and types of students, the videos will have both levels of sophisticatitn and contexts integrated. Thus, for students who have a visually oriented approach to retaining new ideas, the teacher will seek certain contexts for the materials. Since the graphic capabilities of production will have such major ranges, production will be easier.

The publishers will maintain central storehouses of sorts from which the student calls up the specific assignment. Teachers will also have available video disks that may have 100,000+ images from which to draw. Since a menu will be mastered, teachers will locate material desired with the same ease that a computer now will search the ERIC files. In this paper the author will be showing how consequences of ethical decisions can be depicted visually. Not only will the instructor find scenes from past events, the instructor will have the capability to create situations in which the choice of the student will create a situation that can be translated into a visual image.

Paper IV: "Using the Great Teacher Series for Developing the Public Speaking Class"

Note that the teacher can draw upon a Great Teacher Series for content material. For me the major change ahead in teaching will be the change of emphasis from developing my own material to present to the students, to drawing upon the material of others. Only now it will not be finding other text materials to use, but actually having the ability to use other person's materials that are stored on tapes that the university has for each set of objectives. The job of the teacher will be to diagnose what learning problem the student is having and help to remedy that.

A typical teaching scene might be the student comes in to work on developing introductions for presentations to a political body. The teacher recommends for this student the work of Anastasia Taylor on introductions. This material comes in a 20-minute segment. The student goes to the nearby booth and watches Professor Taylor's presentation. While this learning is happening, the professor quickly shapes a problem for the student and feeds it into the booth, so that when the student is done with the tape, the student will have to write an introduction that meets the standards presented in the video lecture. The professor decides that Models 27 (a presentation to a county commission on garbage disposal) and 57 (a bill to the Pennsylvania legislature honoring ECA's 150th anniversary) would be good ones to view before the student starts to write the introduction.

In the meantime, another student comes along with a problem in ethics of evidence selection. The instructor views the past work of the student to discover a problem in viewing credibility of the evidence for specific audiences. Since no program is available at the school in that area, the

professor, via computer, contacts the national office of the National Council of Teachers, Researchers, Practitioners, Friends, and Associates of Process-oriented Relaters who have read Aristotle, Cicero, Phillips, Miller, Bowers, and Bacon (in this computer age, long names are coded up with one code for all types of computers so committee compromises have not been limited by practicality of name length.) The professor asks what is available in the specific area. The office notes that Professor Anderson at the University of Illinois has such a program. The professor then contacts that university, which transmits the program back to the college for the professor to use with the student. During the afternoon, seven other students work on similar problems with such aids from the Great Teachers Series. At 5 o'clock the professor with the nine students gather in a room to speak to each other.

During the presentations, each student is wired with an earphone that allows the instructor to speak to each student while they are speaking. Before the oral presentations, the professor and student have agreed upon two items about which comments will be made. Feedback from this exercise is recorded on the student's records after each presentation. Comments are given by voice and then printed. At the end of the period the professor and student call up the feedback and agree on its meaning. The longer evaluation form was also done by voice--integrating a series of codes with specific oral comments. The students will do the performance a second time with a graduate student monitoring the presentations, but looking for specific problems noted on the form.

During the next morning, the professor will be working on preparing a video for a new area that the university is developing. At 11:00 a.m. he stops the preparation and reviews videos from other schools. His reaction is recorded and sent into the national office of the organization to which he belongs. His feedback, along with that of nine other professors, will lead to a final evaluation for national listing by the professional organization.

At 1:00 p.m. the next day, he will be "on-line" with all the other speech communication professors in the state as they decide what tapes will be made during the next year for the state's own Great Teacher Series. Those teachers who make five or more tapes will have only a small number of students. Those professors who make only two tapes during the year will be assigned a regular load. Those not doing any will have a teaching overload.

Paper V: "Using United Nations Proceedings for Evaluating Evidence From an Intercultural Perspective."

The author of this paper is working with goals in argumentation and intercultural communication by applying them in a current situation. In preparing this exercise, the professor worked with ten students, as parts of the proceedings were analyzed for suitability to the assignment goals. In a week's period of five afternoons, the assignment was developed and tested by this team of 11 people. The assignment was then set forth by the university for all students to complete to meet the evidence evaluation requirement and the intercultural sensitivity goal. Each week, for the rest of the year, the professor will work with students in set hours each Tuesday afternoon. On Mondays he will check with the lab assistants (both graduate and undergraduate) to see what problems are developing.

With the growing Russian population in school, a shift in the attendance pattern meant a switch back to European considerations in the intercultural perspective. The previous assignment was mainly concerned with Asians and Brazilians, but with the change in population the Dean had decided that the professor should change the exercise for the school, although the state-set competencies would remain the same.

Concluding Observations

By now, the apparent similarity of content to the current year is apparent. What has changed is the delivery system. Technology will change the delivery system. Society will change our current limits, so that the globalized communication desired by Deethardt in "A Future for Speech Communication" will indeed be a reality. The delivery system will change the nature of our contact with students. The exciting change will be the duality of increased contact with students while gaining increased resources to bring to bear on teaching. What will not change is the interaction between student and teacher that made Isocrates successful as a teacher.

May your dreams about the teacher give you direction!